

“THINGS SURELY BELIEVED AMONG US”

By Paul O. Nichols

Christians must have conviction and courage if they are to be saved by the Lord. The conviction must be based upon what the Bible teaches. “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” **(Romans 10:17)**.

We believe there is one God. Why do we believe this? Because the Bible says, “there is one God” **(Eph. 4:6)**. The apostle Paul writes to the Corinthians, “For though there be many that are called gods,...to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things...” **(I Cor. 8:5,6)**. We do not question this. We simply accept it by faith.

We believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Jesus said, “...Ye believe in God, believe also in me” **(John 14:1)**. The apostle Peter declares, “And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God” **(John 6:69)**. And Jesus says,...“For if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” **(John 8:24)**.

We believe the Holy Spirit is the third entity in the Godhead.

The Bible says, “And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased” **(Matt. 3:16,17)**. In this account all three of the Godhead are involved. Christ being baptized, the Holy Spirit descending upon Him, and the voice of God in heaven expressing His divine approval. At this time God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and with power **(Acts 10:38)**.

We believe the Bible is the inspired word of God. Jesus promised the apostles, “I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when he, the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth...” **(John 16:12,13)**. The apostle Paul writes, “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” **(II Tim. 3:16,17)**. Peter says, “...his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness” **(II Pet. 1:3)**.

We believe Christ promised to build only one church. He said to the apostles, “Upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” **(Matt. 16:18)**. The church was brought into existence on the day of Pentecost, AD 33 **(Acts chapter 2)** and is made up of the saved. “And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” **(Acts 2:47)**. In the final day when Jesus comes again we believe that He will ... “present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish” **(Eph. 5:27)**. “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it...” **(Psalms 127:1)**.

We believe the church is the spiritual body of Christ. We are told that God “...Hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all” **(Eph. 1:22,23)**. “There is one body...” **(Eph 4:3)**. “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jew or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” **(I Cor. 12:13)**.

We believe God has a plan of salvation.

This plan was ratified with the innocent blood of Jesus. We are told “without the shedding of blood is no remission [of sins]” (Heb. 9:22). Paul says, “...by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us” (Heb. 12:9). However, in order to benefit from this sacrifice one must follow the plan of God. The plan that He gave in His infinite wisdom demands that we believe the testimony of His word. “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Rom. 10:17). His word testifies that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. Jesus says, “if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). When one accepts the fact that Jesus is the Son of God he must repent of his sins. We are told, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out...” (Acts 3:19). Jesus says, “I tell you, Nay, but except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3). This plan also demands that we confess our faith in Jesus Christ. The confession is made with the mouth from the heart (Rom. 10:9,10). “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” is the confession made by the Ethiopian convert in Acts 8:37. This is an

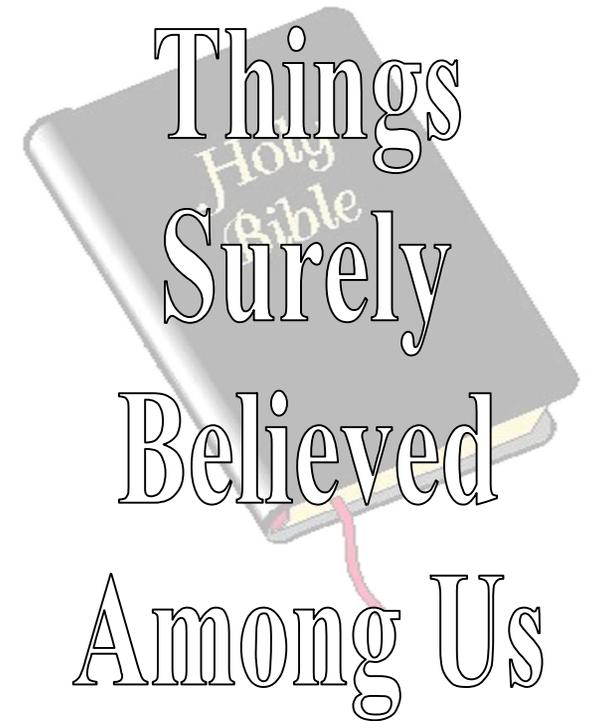
example of the confession that God demands today. One should be more than happy to proclaim his faith in Jesus the Christ. Then, as a matter of faith, one is to be baptized for the remission of his sins. “Repent and be baptized, every one of you,” was the order of the Apostle Peter, “for the remissions of sins” (Acts 2:38). This is God’s plan.

We believe that when a person obeys this plan he becomes a member of the spiritual body of Christ, the church. (I Cor. 12:13: Acts 2:47). He is to “present his body a living sacrifice, wholly and acceptable to God” (Rom. 12:1,2). He is to live “soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world” (Titus 2:12). He is to be “an example of the believers” (I Tim. 4:12), and be “a pattern of good works” (Titus 2:7).

We believe that in order for a Christian to be saved he must remain faithful to the Lord. The promise is “be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of righteousness” (Rev.2:10).

Paul O. Nichols has served the Church of Christ faithfully for over sixty years.

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